

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BERLIN IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:PFOR, GE

SUBJECT:"WASHINGTON POST" EDITORIAL ON FORCED ADOPTION
IN THE GDR

1. DECEMBER 28 ISSUE OF "WASHINGTON POST" CONTAINED
FOLLOWING EDITORIAL TITLED "THE VILENESS OF EAST GERMANY"
ON THE ISSUE OF FORCED ADOPTION IN THE GDR OF CHILDREN
OF PERSONS APPREHENDED FOR ATTEMPTED FLIGHT FROM THE
GDR:

BEGIN TEXT:

MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN KNOWS NO SEASONAL LIMITATION. BUT
A RECENTLY REVEALED PRACTICE OF THE COMMUNIST REGIME OF
EAST GERMANY IS SO EGREGIOUS THAT IT DESERVES SPECIAL
CONDEMNATION AT HOLIDAY TIME. THE EAST GERMANS APPARENTLY
HAVE HIT UPON A NEW FORM OF PUNISHMENT FOR THOSE OF THEIR
CITIZENS CAUGHT TRYING TO FLEE TO THE WEST: THEIR
CHILDREN ARE IN EFFECT IMPOUNDED BY THE STATE AND PUT OUT
TO ADOPTION. THUS WHEN, OR IF, THE PARENTS ARE RELEASED
YEARS LATER FROM JAIL, THEY WILL BE UNABLE TO RECLAIM
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PAGE 02 STATE 303738

THEIR CHILDREN OR EVEN TO KNOW WHO--LET ALONE WHERE--

THEY ARE. TWO, POSSIBLY THREE, CASES OF THIS MONSTROUS PRACTICE HAVE BEEN REPORTED. EAST GERMANY AUTHENTICATED

THE REPORTS, IN THE MANNER IN WHICH COMMUNIST STATES AUTHENTICATE SUCH REPORTS, BY EXPELLING THE CORRESPONDENT OF THE WEST GERMAN MAGAZINE, DER SPIEGEL, WHICH MADE THEM.

THE WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO REUNITE THESE SUNDERED FAMILIES. CONCEIVABLY THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE TRADE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN EAST GERMANY, AND CONVICTED SPIES IN WEST GERMANY, WHICH IS A SOMBER BUT FAMILIAR FEATURE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GERMAN STATES. THE GUILLAUMES, RECENTLY SENTENCED IN AN ESPIONAGE PLOT WHOSE PRINCIPAL TARGET AND VICTIM WAS WILLY BRANDT, COULD YET FIGURE IN SUCH A TRADE. YET THIS SHOULD NOT BE REGARDED AS BUSINESS AS USUAL. EAST GERMANY SHOULD BE MADE TO PAY AS HEAVY A PRICE AS DECENT PEOPLE CAN DEMAND IN THE COURT OF INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC OPINION. IT IS LOATHSOME THAT THE CITIZENS OF A PARTICULAR COUNTRY CANNOT LEAVE IT LEGALLY IF THEY CHOOSE. IT IS DOUBLY VILE THAT THOSE WHO TRY TO LEAVE, AND FAIL, SHOULD HAVE THEIR CHILDREN TORN PERMANENTLY FROM THEM.

END TEXT.

2. GDR EMBASSY HAS NOT PROTESTED TO DEPARTMENT ABOUT EDITORIAL, ALTHOUGH WE ANTICIPATE THAT THEY WILL AND MFA WILL PROBABLY RAISE THIS MATTER WITH EMBASSY. IF GDR EMBASSY RAISES EDITORIAL WITH DEPARTMENT, WE PLAN TO POINT OUT THAT THE USG HAS NO CONTROL OVER THE US PRESS, BUT GDR SHOULD REALIZE THAT IT CANNOT REMAIN FREE FROM CRITICISM FOR ACTIONS WHICH THE AMERICAN PUBLIC FINDS OFFENSIVE. ROBINSON

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